



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

**U.S. Department  
of the Interior**

[www.doi.gov](http://www.doi.gov)  
**News Release**

Date: September 12, 2019  
Contact: [Interior\\_Press@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov)

**Interior Announces Availability of Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Final  
Environmental Impact Statement**

*Leasing Program will help meet the long-term energy needs of the nation, support job  
creation and economic growth of rural Alaskan communities*

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** — Today the Department of the Interior (DOI) is making available the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program. The environmental analysis considers a range of alternatives in order to meet energy leasing provisions contained in Section 20001 of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-97), signed into law by President Trump on December 22, 2017.

"Affordable energy and great paying energy jobs help power our nation's economy, which is clearly thriving under President Trump's policies," stated **U.S. Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt**. "After rigorous review, robust public comment, and a consideration of a range of alternatives, today's announcement is a big step to carry out the clear mandate we received from Congress to develop and implement a leasing program for the Coastal Plain, a program the people of Alaska have been seeking for over 40 years."

The Act directs the Secretary of the Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), to establish two area-wide leasing sales, not less than 400,000 acres each, along the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It also authorizes up to 2,000 acres, or 0.01% of ANWR's 19.3 million acres, for surface facilities.

"A large and diverse team including Tribes, partners, the state of Alaska and experts from across the Service worked with BLM on the range of alternatives contained in the EIS, as well as the protective mitigation measures that would apply to oil and gas activities in this unique area," said **Margaret Everson, Principal Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**. "The team's work forms the scientific and conservation foundation that will protect high-value wildlife habitats and important uses in this area, while advancing the President's agenda on energy independence."

More than 70 employees (BLM, contract, other federal agencies and the State of Alaska) and at least 13,000 labor hours were dedicated to developing the EIS. An integral part of the analysis included staff from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who were instrumental in developing the range of alternatives contained in the EIS as well as the protective mitigation measures. The EIS includes protections for species native to the area and any migrating species listed as threatened or endangered.

“Forty years after Congress selected the Arctic Coastal Plain for potential energy development, the Trump Administration is making good on that decades old potential,” said **Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy**. “I join with all Alaska Governors since 1980 in assuring the nation and the world that we develop our natural resources responsibly. I look forward to the lease sale scheduled for later this year.”

“This is a major step forward in our decades-long efforts to allow for responsible resource development in Alaska’s 1002 Area, and I thank Secretary Bernhardt and his team for their thousands of hours of hard work,” said **Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)**. “I’m hopeful we can now move to a lease sale in the very near future, just as Congress intended, so that we can continue to strengthen our economy, our energy security, and our long-term prosperity.”

“For decades, Alaskans have been urging their federal government to open the 1002 area of ANWR for exploration,” said **Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK)**. “At long last, Congress voted to allow it. Now, the administration is working diligently to fulfill Congress’s directions in a transparent and responsible process. I welcome today’s announcement— another critical step in the process to unleash Alaska’s energy and economic potential. As Alaska has shown time and again, we can responsibly develop our resources, under the highest environmental standards, to grow our state and significantly contribute toward the goal of energy dominance for our country.”

“The release of this final EIS to open the 1002 area of ANWR is the culmination of decades of work. I have fought for responsible oil and gas exploration on the Coastal Plain since ANWR was created, and I am immensely pleased that we have reached this stage,” said **Rep. Don Young (R-AK-At Large)**. “Alaskans are committed environmental stewards, and they know how to balance environmental protection and resource development — we did it in Prudhoe Bay and we’ll do it again in ANWR. I want to thank President Trump and his Administration, particularly Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt, the former Assistant Secretary, and Alaska BLM State Director Chad Padgett for their tireless work in completing this EIS and getting us closer to fully-realized resource development in the 1002 area of ANWR.”

The BLM will next prepare a Record of Decision, which may be published no earlier than 30 days after the official Notice of Availability for the EIS is published in the Federal Register.

View the EIS on the [Coastal Plain project page](#).





Caption: Pictures of the Coastal Plain in Alaska.

***Additional Statements of Support:***

Government Leaders:

“I applaud the Bureau of Land Management’s hard work in developing this report and stepping closer to implementing energy exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). This Environmental Impact Statement shows we are more than capable of opening federal lands to energy exploration while protecting native, migratory, threatened, and endangered wildlife. Restrictive legislation, like attempts on the House floor this week to repeal the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act’s ANWR provision and limit energy exploration elsewhere, represents a misunderstanding about the relationship between energy and our environment. All-of-the-above energy policies prove that we can protect our environment while promoting a strong economy and reducing energy costs for the American people.” – **Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA-01), House Minority Whip**

“I applaud this Administration’s commitment to eliminating bureaucratic roadblocks that hinder economic growth. The 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has allowed Wyoming families to keep more of their hard-earned money and has facilitated the strengthening of our domestic energy industry. Today’s announcement is another promise kept by President Trump. I look forward to continuing to work with the President and my colleagues in Congress to ensure that Wyoming remains a leader in energy production.” - **Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY-At-Large), Chairman of the House Republican Caucus**

“The right of Alaska Natives to control their livelihoods is now protected by law. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act promoted the ability to provide for their families and communities as they see fit. These BLM findings further support the local use of these resources as well as providing appropriate protections. The Bureau should be proud of the thousands of hours of hard work put into supporting the law and empowering local will.” – **Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT-01), Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Committee**

“I’m pleased the administration is moving forward to establish a leasing program along the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I was proud to have played a role in this limited development through the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. I am hopeful this will help us meet our energy needs and reduce our energy dependence on foreign oil. This could create new jobs and generate billions of dollars while preserving the vast majority of the area.” -**Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY)**

“At a time when Democratic presidential candidates are promising to end all energy investments on public lands, thus killing tens of thousands of American jobs, it is good to see the current administration fighting for energy production grounded in environmental science.” –**Senator Mike Lee (R-UT)**

“Development of this small section of ANWR creates jobs and moves America forward towards energy dominance.” **Senator Bill Cassidy, Chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy**



“The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act continues to provide real results for the American people. American energy production helps our economy and national security while making us less reliant on foreign countries. I applaud the Trump Administration and Secretary Bernhardt for their thorough efforts to implement the law in a responsible and timely manner.” –**Senator Kevin Cramer (R-ND)**

“Today’s announcement brings us one step closer to creating good paying jobs here at home and keeping our country on track towards global energy dominance, making the world a much safer place,” –**Senator Steve Daines (R-MT), Chairman of the Senate Western Caucus**

“Responsible energy production in Section 1002 is not only a victory for Alaska, but for all America. Increased domestic energy production will create new jobs, support energy independence, and promote national security. For years Alaskans, their elected officials, and native communities have voiced support for energy production in this tiny area. It’s time to get it done.” - **Rep. Paul Gosar (R-AZ-04), Chairman of Western Caucus**

“I applaud the Trump Administration for taking action toward opening the ANWR coastal plain to energy exploration. This step helps establish an all-of-the-above energy policy that creates jobs, lowers energy prices, and reduces America’s dependence on foreign oil.” - **Rep. Devin Nunes (R-CA-22)**

“With American energy production at all-time levels, it is unconscionable that my home state of California imports nearly 60% of its oil from foreign sources. We must continue to maximize our nation’s vast energy resources to reduce dependence on foreign energy and strengthen our national security. Opening ANWR’s Coastal Plain to oil and gas leasing will grow our economy and increase domestic energy production – all while maintaining critical environmental safeguards. I applaud the Bureau of Land Management for their tireless work to finalize this Environmental Impact Statement, and I look forward to full implementation of the ANWR leasing provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.” –**Rep. Ken Calvert (R-CA-42)**

“After years of unwarranted opposition from out-of-state environmentalists and obstructionist politicians, I am glad to see this administration work the will of the American people. It’s steps like this that will ensure American energy independence for future generations.” – **Rep. Tom McClintock (R-CA-04)**

“The Environmental Impact Statement regarding the leasing program along the Coastal Plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) proves that energy dominance and environmental protection are not antithetical. The Bureau of Land Management and many other cooperating agencies are opening access to the untapped and abundant oil reserves in ANWR, while also protecting the diverse wildlife species that migrate through northern Alaska. The leasing program

in ANWR is supported by the Iñupiat people of Kaktovik, the closest indigenous people to the area; it will grow the tax base; it will increase job opportunities; and it will reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil even further so that the United States will no longer have to support countries fraught with instability, poor human rights records, and lax environmental standards.” –**Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-TX-01)**

“Approving development on the 1002 Area in ANWR has been a long time in the making. Congress initially set aside 1.57 million acres for development in the 19 million acre refuge in 1980. Today’s decision approves exploration on less than one hundredth of 1 percent of that land, about 2,000 acres in total. More than 13,000 manhours went into rigorously reviewing the environmental impact of this development, ensuring that developers will produce clean, American energy at the highest standard. This decision further underscores the Trump administration’s success in promoting American energy dominance.” –**Rep. Bruce Westerman (R-AR-04)**

“I am proud of the thorough and legally sound process the Department of Interior has undertaken to produce this final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This final EIS is a step to furthering our country’s energy independence while providing new jobs in rural America. I look forward to the first lease sale.” –**Rep. Russ Fulcher (R-ID-01)**

“President Trump and his administration are hard at work to unleash America’s energy potential. Our nation produces the cleanest and safest energy in the world. Increased American production means more jobs, lower energy costs, a stronger economy, and a cleaner planet. With the completion of the EIS, we’re one step closer toward expanding oil and gas exploration and meeting our goal of American energy dominance.” – **Rep. Clay Higgins (R-LA-03)**

“Today I stand with President Trump, Secretary Bernhardt, and my colleagues from Alaska in applauding the release of the Final EIS for the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program in ANWR. America’s unrivaled natural resources are a major part of what makes this nation great. Whether it be oil in Alaska or mining and forestry in northern Minnesota, it is always better to develop our natural resources with our workers in our home. A product of the world’s strongest environmental laws, this Final EIS is the blueprint to continue President Trump’s vision of independence from our foreign adversaries while driving down the cost of energy for our citizens.” – **Rep. Pete Stauber (R-MN-08)**

“I believe in responsible oversight of our nation’s wildlife and environment. I also believe that securing America’s energy independence in a safe and sustainable way has a positive impact on our local and the global environment. Oil and gas resources have been safely developed in the Arctic for more than 40 years. Revenue from these projects has helped to assist in building schools, health clinics, and sanitation systems for the local Iñupiat that call the Arctic home. The energy exploration and production proposed in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)

Coastal Plain does this. It is the best possible balance of light footprint and energy production.”  
– **Rep. Dan Webster (R-FL-11)**

“Energy dominance on the world stage is essential to a strong American future. Reliance on our foreign adversaries for resources is dangerous and weakens our country. This is a fantastic step forward in the process to utilize the resources we have in the Arctic National Wildlife Range.” –  
**Rep. Kevin Hern (R-OK-01)**

“Tax reform not only delivered on tax cuts for the country, but it paved the way to further American energy dominance by authorizing the development of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The development of this region will create jobs, lower prices of oil and gas, and continue our successes of domestic energy production.” -- **Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-SC-03)**

“The people of Alaska have spent decades fighting to develop the natural resources in ANWR. Allowing this access will improve America’s energy independence, create jobs, and provide affordable, reliable energy for millions. I appreciate the efforts of those who’ve worked tirelessly to open responsible production in ANWR while ensuring protections are in place for native species and the environment,” -- **Rep. Ken Buck (R-CO-04)**

External Stakeholders:

"As the innovators, inventors, entrepreneurs and disruptors who are improving lives and transforming the world, we support this Administration's efforts to foster a pro-growth energy program. Our energy renaissance has put millions of Americans to work and created countless new opportunities for manufacturers. Responsible development of our oil and natural gas resources will create jobs, grow our economy, and increase American energy security." --**Ross Eisenberg, Vice President, Energy & Resources Policy, National Association of Manufacturers**

“RDC has long supported oil and gas exploration and development in the coastal plain of ANWR. This is a historic opportunity for Alaska. Statewide support for oil and gas exploration in the non-wilderness area of ANWR continues to be strong. In fact, polling has shown more than 70 percent of Alaskans support development of energy resources beneath the 1002 area. Local residents and many of the Inupiat people who actually live adjacent to the 1002 area have also supported development. It is promising to see the government working toward implementing the legislation Alaska’s congressional delegation worked so hard to get passed, opening the Coastal Plain to responsible development.” - **Marleanna Hall, Executive Director, Resource Development Council.**